

Winnipeg metro



WHY WE CAN'T HAVE NICE THINGS



Cardboard Trudeaus nixed
from Canadian consulates
metroNEWS

Your essential daily news | TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2017

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THE TORY AGENDA

Non-profits brace for funding cuts

AUDIT

Layoff notices issued ahead of provincial budget



**Jessica
Botelho-Urbanski**
For Metro | Winnipeg

With rumblings of provincial budget cutbacks, some local non-profits are worried about whether they will have to lay off staff or cut programming come April if they receive less funding than usual.

Kate Kehler, executive director of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, said she's heard of three organizations already issuing staff layoff notices in anticipation of cuts in the Tory budget due April 11.

Kehler said few non-profits are comfortable speaking on the record about the issue, for fear they may jeopardize their provincial funding agreements, a sentiment echoed by

a University of Winnipeg professor. "I think people are starting to realize they're likely to lose their funding or a good portion of it. But I think still some of them are holding out hope," said Shauna MacKinnon, an associate professor in the urban and inner city studies department.

"It's hard to know who's going to be affected (and) how," she said. "(The province) is going to get rid of something. We just don't know what."

The province undertook a value-for-money audit last year to find departmental savings.

Kehler said she's asked the government to make the audit results public to clarify which non-profits may get less cash.

"From my perspective, I had hoped to see the results of that audit prior to the budget so that we all are working with the same information," Kehler said.

A provincial spokesperson said in an emailed statement Monday the municipal relations department doesn't have a date set for when the

partial audit results will be released.

"The Department is aware of some non-governmental organizations seeking budget certainty as the fiscal year closes and is considering available options," the spokesperson told Metro.

Dawn Sands, executive director for the North End Community Renewal Corporation, said her organization receives about 10 per cent of its core funding from the province, which amounts to \$353,000.

On Friday, she wasn't yet sure whether their funding would stay the same or fluctuate for 2017, but didn't want to discuss the situation at length before the budget release.

"I am willing to go on record just basically to say that it's never a comfortable feeling when your funding has become uncertain, especially core funding," Sands said. "But we're quite confident in the work that we do and hope that this new government really sees the value of NECRC and the impact that we have on the community."

CRACKING DOWN ON

LIGHTING UP

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Manitobans to face
penalties for driving
high, smoking in
public places

metroNEWS

Plus More on the agenda

- Next stop: Winnipeg? Tories table Uber-friendly bill
- Tuition hikes possible: Five per cent tagged on to inflation rate
- Public-sector workers face two-year wage increase **metroNEWS**



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THE TORY AGENDA

POLITICS

Pallister to raise limit of donations

Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister is following through on a plan to raise the limit on political donations.

A bill before the legislature would boost the cap on individual donations to \$5,000 from \$3,000 and allow for annual increases with the rate of inflation.

The bill would also allow for more political advertising in election years.

Premier Brian Pallister has said current limits in Manitoba are among the lowest in Canada.

Pallister killed a public subsidy for political parties last year, and has said the higher donation limits will help parties make up for the lost money if they can fundraise effectively.

The opposition parties have said higher limits would mean politics controlled by the rich.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Government to set new pot laws

MARIJUANA

Legislation for weed would be similar to that of alcohol

The Manitoba government is moving to set restrictions on marijuana similar to those on alcohol.

Proposed legislation would list marijuana as an intoxicant and ban people from consuming it in a vehicle.

Police would also have the right to suspend a driver's licence for 24 hours — similar to an alcohol provision — if they thought a person was under the influence of pot.

And, like tobacco, marijuana could not be smoked in enclosed public places.

Justice Minister Heather Stefanson says the province is laying the groundwork for when the federal government legalizes cannabis.

The Manitoba bill says public schools would be required to ban marijuana under their codes of conduct, even after it becomes legal.

Details surrounding marijuana legalization — such as where it might be sold — have yet to be worked out.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Under the new laws police would clamp down on people being stoned behind the wheel.

AFF/GETTY IMAGES

OPINION

Austerity measures will only fuel far right

INSIDE THE PERIMETER

Shannon VanRaes



The winds of austerity are sweeping Manitoba and a storm is brewing in their wake.

For decades, conservatives like Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister could satisfy his base with unimaginative cuts to spending. They could slash programs most affecting the poor and the marginalized and call it a day. A fine example of this tone resonated in legislation put forward by the PC government this week and will no doubt reach a crescendo in the provincial budget next month.

Mayor Brian Bowman is also pushing an austerity campaign, enacting a hiring freeze and slashing the city's road renewal budget by \$35 million, even as property taxes rise.

But the biggest problem with austerity — other than the fact it stifles growth, neglects infrastructure and weakens core services among other things — is that austerity isn't for everyone. Oh, sure, austerity is for you and it's for me, it's for city workers, educators, for children and for small businesses, but austerity is not for those at the top, it's not for wealthy and empowered.

Plans for austerity didn't stop Bowman from hiring former business owner Michael Legary as the city's innovation officer two weeks before enacting his spotty hiring freeze,

and it didn't stop him from approving a \$3.2-million tax break for True North Square. Pallister loves grandstanding by calling on the federal government to provide more funding in response to the current uptick in asylum seekers, but he cut funding to a program administered by the Islamic Social Services Association that helped new arrivals only a few months ago.

The Tories also plan to cut regulations around everything from drinking water to infrastructure assessments, whatever could go wrong there? Not to mention the \$1 billion in cancelled health care projects and massive job cuts at Manitoba Hydro.

What's different this time around, however, is that austerity isn't just hitting the wrong notes on the left, it's also creating discord among the conservative base.

But they aren't being pushed to the centre, nor the left, austerity is pushing conservatives farther and farther to the right, either because politicians are ignoring their constituents' actual demands, or because they're fanning flames and finger-pointing rather than accepting responsibility for hacking away at our safety nets. When Ted Falk targets migrants, when Pallister responds to questions about carbon pricing with comments about a race war or when Kellie Leitch says just about anything, the shift is clear.

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THE TORY AGENDA

Bill shifts power to municipality

TRANSPORTATION

Makes city responsible for Uber, taxi industry



Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

The City of Winnipeg has less than a year to prepare for regulating the local cab industry and wrestle with the question of clearing the road for Uber.

On Monday, Indigenous and Municipal Relations Minister Eileen Clarke tabled Bill 30, the Local Vehicle for Hire Act.

The new legislation dissolves the Manitoba Taxicab Board and transfers the responsibility of regulating the industry from the provincial to the municipal level.

It also opens the doors for

transportation network companies, such as Uber or Lyft, to enter the city by giving municipalities the power to enact relevant bylaws.

"Right now the City of Winnipeg is the only one that's under provincial legislation, all the other municipalities look after their own regulation of taxicabs," explained board chairman Randy Williams, who supports the province's move.

"This just levels the playing field for all municipalities."

The new legislation will take effect Feb. 28, 2018 or sooner if the city is ready, the province says.

Coun. Ross Eadie, who resigned from the taxicab board over concerns about the board's attitude towards Uber, says the city lacks the financial resources or expertise to take on regulation of the cab industry.

According to a provincial website, the board is responsible for a range of duties,

from issuing business and taxi licences and dealing with complaints against drivers to controlling the fare structure and having regular hearings.



The Manitoba government has just dumped on the city.

Coun. Ross Eadie

"The Manitoba government has just dumped on the city and I'm sure there will be more April 11 (provincial budget day)," Eadie

said Monday.

Mayor Brian Bowman was of a different opinion.

He said the legislation, which caught civic officials

by surprise, presents an opportunity for the city to be innovative.

"I think there's going to be a lot of work required by a lot of people to understand the path forward, but I do think it's an opportunity for us to move things forward for the benefit of customers," he told reporters.

Bowman publicly expressed his desire to welcome Uber into the city during his recent state of the city address.

But on Monday, Bowman wouldn't comment on any details of the new bill, such as the potential costs it carries for the city or the one-year deadline, saying only further dialogue with the province is needed first.

Transferring the cab industry to the city's jurisdiction and allowing Uber into the local market were two of 40 recommendations made in an external review of the industry, ordered by the former NDP government.

EDUCATION

Students prepare to fight fee hike, lobby for free tuition



Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

The past few days have been marked by highs and lows for student advocates in Manitoba — from elation at the prospect of free tuition, to disappointment at the potential of increased fees.

Michael Barkman, chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Manitoba chapter, said both developments will require vigilance and ongoing student lobbying.

On the one hand, a motion to do away with tuition fees was supported at the New Democratic Party's annual convention.

"It's kind of unprecedented at least in Manitoba to see a party endorse fully funded education," Barkman noted, adding it is something CFS has been lobbying for and, given the NDP's fall from power at the last provincial election, something they'll keep pursuing.

"It's something we'll push all political parties to endorse — education is a non-partisan issue," he said. "Endorsing universal education would be good for any party."

Barkman also pointed out that "resolutions at conven-

tions are not necessarily what parties hold on to at election time," which is all the more reason to "continue to push for parties to endorse (free tuition) when it really counts."

Any positivity over that development was short-lived, however, as the sitting Progressive Conservative government introduced legislation Monday that would raise the cap on student fee increases from that of inflation to inflation plus five per cent.

"Many students who saw this happen in real time (at the legislature Monday) were so angry and upset about these fee increases... it's a step backwards," Barkman said. "This is something we're pushing hard against."

A statement from the provincial government explained the bill would "ensure that Manitoba universities are able to provide a quality education while keeping tuition rates the lowest in Western Canada."

Barkman explained that even with Manitoba's low tuition rates, average debt is still \$19,000 in the province, and the generation graduating today is "the most indebted gen-

eration in history."

As such, he said they will explore every possible avenue to "step into the process and prevent this bill from passing."

Changes would come into effect for the 2018-19 academic year if passed, and would also enable universities "to set tuition at rates that better reflect the cost of delivering programs," remove the "unnecessary processes to review course-related fees," and allow the province to "deduct a portion of the grants to universities" if average fees are not the lowest among western provinces.

In an emailed statement, University of Winnipeg president and vice-chancellor Annette Trimbee said the post-secondary institution is "deeply committed" to providing high-quality, accessible education.

"We don't have all the answers today: most importantly we need to know how the province's student aid program changes will help low-income students, and what annual grant the province will provide towards our operating budget," the statement read.

WITH FILES FROM LUCY SCHOLEY

EMPLOYMENT

Freezing public-sector wages

Manitoba's Progressive Conservative government faced the threat of a labour lawsuit Monday as it moved to freeze public-sector wages and raise post-secondary tuition fees.

A bill introduced in the legislature would force a two-year wage freeze on public-sector workers — including teachers, nurses, and doctors paid through

fees — when their current collective agreements expire. They would receive a 0.75 per cent pay increase in the third year and one per cent in the fourth.

While Premier Brian Pallister described the bill as fair because it does not call for existing contracts to be reopened, a top provincial labour leader said the government is interfering

in collective bargaining and the bill could face a court challenge.

"We want to work together to balance the budget and we think we can do that at the bargaining table," said Kevin Rebeck, president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

"Them limiting our ability to do so isn't fair and isn't reasonable." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SWIMMING ATTIRE

Hotel apologizes, stands by policy

A standoff over "proper swimming attire" at a hotel pool has been resolved following a flurry of emails between hotel staff and a concerned patron.

Shania Pruden, 19, posted on social media last week she had "never felt so ashamed" in her life after a lifeguard asked her to remove her T-shirt in the pool.

General manager Mike Roziere said he reviewed the video surveillance footage late last week and determined the lifeguard wasn't singling out Pruden.

The lifeguard also asked 11 other people — nine women and two men — to change into more appropriate swimwear within a half-hour span, Roziere said Monday.

The lifeguard didn't want to partake in an interview, ac-

cording to the manager.

"I apologized (to Pruden) and said, 'I'm sorry you felt (singled out).' We do have a responsibility to try to keep people safe in our pool area," Roziere said.

"My policy hasn't changed because the pool will be shut down if I don't do that, and then nobody's playing in it," he said of the swimwear rules, noting they are in place for safety and sanitation concerns.

In a followup interview Monday, Pruden said she suggested to Roziere that hotel staff alert guests about the swimwear policy upon checking in, so as to avoid future confusion.

"Because not everyone's comfortable swimming with no shirt on," she said.

JESSICA BOTELHO-URBANSKI/
FOR METRO

CONCERT

Bob Dylan to blow into MTS Centre



Jessica Botelho-Urbanski
For Metro | Winnipeg

Legendary folk singer-songwriter Bob Dylan will be knocking on the MTS Centre's door July 12.

The 75-year-old music icon is scheduled to play Winnipeg as part of 18 Canadian stops on his summer tour.

Dylan is promoting his 68th

album Triplicate, his first-ever three-disc album, according to his website, featuring 30 new recordings of classic American songs.

Tickets for the Winnipeg show go on sale Friday, Mar. 24 at 10 a.m. through Ticketmaster. Price ranges are not yet listed on the website.

Dylan last played the MTS Centre in 2012. Prior to a local concert in 2008, he visited Neil Young's childhood home in Winnipeg.



Bob Dylan will be at the MTS Centre July 12. CHRIS PIZZELLO/AP FILE



Winnipeg bus drivers close down Portage and Main after gathering to support each other at a rally for Irvine Fraser, who was killed by a passenger, and to demand safety improvements on buses outside city hall on Feb. 17. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bus drivers' union getting 'desperate'

TRANSIT SAFETY

Organization considering security guards after stabbing



Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

The union representing Winnipeg Transit operators is getting "desperate" to find solutions to protect drivers from assaults that happen almost daily, according to its president.

John Callahan of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505 said that's why they're con-

sidering hiring private security guards — a move he's not even sure is legal.

"It's a desperate measure, but if that's what it takes, (we will), because we can't wait 90 days and hope for the best and leave our operators hanging," he said Monday.

That 90-day wait is the deadline a committee approved for the transit department to produce a report on the safety measures currently in place for drivers.

Callahan accused the department of using that as an excuse to not take immediate action, which he believes is necessary since the stabbing death of driver Irvine Jubal Fraser Feb. 14.

"I feel that transit should be doing everything they can at

"We can't wait 90 days and hope for the best and leave our operators hanging."

John Callahan

this point, err on the side of caution, put extra support out there, but that's just not happening," he said, adding only one extra supervisor has been assigned to nights.

Two more drivers were put in harm's way this past weekend, Callahan said.

In one incident, he said, a

female passenger, who was reported to have been drunk, spat on a female driver, slapped her across the face with a newspaper and ripped the pocket off her uniform after the driver asked her to get off the bus.

He explained the other assault happened when a male passenger threatened to kill a driver and all the passengers on board.

"It's very disturbing," said Callahan of the incidents.

Besides eyeing new security, members are being asked to fill out a survey on workplace safety, including if they support driver shields being installed, which he plans to present to the city.

He said the union has a meeting planned with transit's manager of operations this week to discuss security.

ANNIVERSARY

Premier planning bike tour between First Nation settlements



Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

Manitoba's active premier, who has already commuted to the legislature by canoe, is planning a long-distance bike tour for this summer.

Over the course of three

days between June 16 and 18, Premier Brian Pallister will cycle approximately 160 kilometres between the original and current settlements of Peguis First Nation on what he calls a "mission of friendship."

According to a prepared statement, the bicycle tour is in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the Selkirk Treaty

of 1817, in which Lord Selkirk originally signed a treaty granting land to five Indigenous leaders, including the St. Peter's land in East Selkirk, to Chief Peguis.

"The legacy of an extraordinary friendship between Lord Selkirk and Chief Peguis laid the foundation for what would later become Mani-

toba," Pallister said.

"The story of Manitoba is one of centuries of compassion, friendship and partnership between Indigenous Manitobans and those who arrived after them.

"That partnership is the bedrock on which our strong and beautiful province was built."

Jerry Daniels of the Southern Chiefs' Organization said he recognized it as a gesture to "educate and provide understanding of the Selkirk Treaty of 1817 and of the true history of our people's partnership."

"This is an opportune time for all Manitobans to reflect on the importance of what occurred 200 years ago," he said.

Pallister is inviting Manitobans to join him on his tour by writing a letter to the province's Indigenous peoples, "expressing your gratitude for the vital role they played in the formation of our province."

Letters submitted by April 15 will be delivered to Peguis First Nation in the Interlake region during Pallister's trip.

Details ahead on new social services program

BUDGET

Infrastructure bank could bring in billions of dollars in funds

A new infrastructure bank could free up billions in new money for social services Canadians regularly use, internal government documents say — provided the experimental new institution meets its lofty financing goals.

The presentation, prepared for the economic growth council that's advising Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his cabinet, shows transit and water projects going through the bank could mean more federal dollars for social infrastructure like child care, recreational facilities and seniors' centres.

Funding for social infrastructure projects, which tend to be less attractive to private investors, could increase by one-third if the bank meets its target of leveraging \$4 in private investment for every \$1 from the federal government, the documents indicate.

Those documents, obtained under the Access to Information Act, demonstrate the Lib-



Much of the political intrigue ahead of Finance Minister Bill Morneau's second federal budget Wednesday has been removed. THE CANADIAN PRESS

eral government's thinking on how money from its long-term infrastructure program could help them meet their economic and political goals.

The program's three streams — social, transit and so-called "green" infrastructure — are worth almost \$69.1 billion in new funding over the next 10 years.

Wednesday's budget will unveil more details of how the money will flow and where the funding for the bank will come

from, say sources who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Concerns have persisted that the funding would be diverted away from money earmarked to cities and provinces.

The government has argued the promised infrastructure money remains available even if it is delivered through the bank, which cities and provinces will have the option of using.

More details about the bank itself will come in the weeks and months to follow once cabinet

has approved tabling the legislation that will create the institution, the sources said.

The Liberals plan to finance the bank with \$35 billion — \$15 billion of it in cash — to back-stop projects and attract private investment for those that can generate revenue through transit fares, water rates or road tolls.

The hope is that the federal money will generate \$140 billion in private investment, particularly from pension plans looking for steady, predictable returns that will also keep up with inflation.

The government has already unveiled the concept of the bank and the dollar figures attached to it, removing much of the political intrigue ahead of Finance Minister Bill Morneau's second federal budget Wednesday.

But the concept has unleashed flurry of arguments.

A study released Monday from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives suggests the bank will cost Canadians more over the long term. In it, economist Toby Sanger argues that much depends on interest rates: The federal government can borrow at rates below 2.5 per cent, while private investors want returns of seven to nine per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DIPLOMACY

Cut it out: Cardboard Trudeaus banned

Justin Trudeau may still be a big draw on the international circuit, but his cardboard stand-ins have fallen flat.

Global Affairs has instructed diplomatic missions in the U.S. to stop using life-size cardboard cut-outs of the prime minister to promote Canada. The order follows the revelation last week that prime ministerial replicas turned up at an event last June organized by the Canadian consulate in Atlanta and earlier this month at a Canadian music festival in Austin, Tex.

The Canadian embassy in Washington also rush-ordered a cut-out of its own for use at Canada Day celebrations last year, at a cost of \$147.79, including \$72.80 for next-day delivery.

The embassy has not explained whether the cardboard Trudeau was ever actually used.

Regardless, it will now have to go into storage.

"We are aware of instances where our missions in the United States had decided to purchase and use these cut-outs," Global Affairs spokeswoman Natasha Nystrom said in an email. It's not clear if



Trudeau replicas turned up at an event last June organized by the Canadian consulate in Atlanta and earlier this month at a Canadian music festival in Austin, Tex. TWITTER.COM

the missions ever had departmental permission to use the cardboard cut-outs.

According to emails obtained by the Conservatives through the Access to Information Act, the Washington embassy's interest in using a cardboard likeness was sparked by word that the Atlanta consulate had put one on display at a pre-Canada Day event last year.

Asked if Ottawa had given

permission, Louise Blais, the Atlanta consul general, advised the embassy that she did ask but "never got an answer."

Anna Gibbs, senior events production manager at the Washington embassy, was excited about the prospect of putting Trudeau's image on display.

"I think this will be a hoot and extremely popular and go well with our Snapchat filter," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

JOURNALISM

Metro gets NNA nod for coverage of Fort McMurray

Metro Calgary and Metro Edmonton have been named finalists in the National Newspaper Awards for coverage of the Fort McMurray wildfires.

The papers are nominated in the breaking news category for stories detailing the first 36 hours of evacuation efforts.

The coverage chronicled first-person accounts of some of the more than 88,000 fleeing the city, provided timely information to Albertans as the wildfires grew and delivered stories of courage and giving.

"The devastating effect of the Fort McMurray wildfires will not be forgotten by Alberta, or Canada," said Cathrin Bradbury, Vice-President and Editor-in-Chief of Metro English Canada.

"We're tremendously proud of the work done by our Alberta reporting teams, with the support of their Toronto colleagues, to document the bravery and fear of those first crucial hours." METRO



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FBI probes Trump ties to the Russians

INVESTIGATION

White House moves to cut links to past associates

It's now been revealed that the FBI had two political bombshells ready to drop during the last U.S. election. One, it unloaded on Democrats two weeks before election day. The other it held onto — until two months into Donald Trump's presidency.

It dropped Monday. In an announcement that could forever affect history's account of the 2016 election, the FBI announced that it has been investigating possible criminal collusion between the Russian government and associates of the Trump campaign since July.

FBI director James Comey revealed it while testifying to Congress. He's the same FBI director who during the campaign commented publicly about an investigation into Hillary Clin-

ton's emails. The news came in a five-hour hearing that concluded with the Republican committee chair stating the politically obvious: this shadow will linger for a while, creeping over the Trump White House. "There's a big, grey cloud that you have now put over people who have very important work to do to lead this country."



There's a big, grey cloud that you have now put over people who have very important work to do to lead this country. James Comey

Comey replied: "I understand."

His revelation fanned a low-level fire crackling for months in the U.S. capital over why the Putin government intervened in the U.S. election; what its motives might have been; and whether the Trump team knew about it.

Late last July, Comey said, the agency began investigating contacts between Trump associates and the Russian gov-

ernment — which is believed to have stolen emails from the Democratic party and leaked them through intermediaries Wikileaks and Guccifer.

The investigation will include whether crimes were committed. It's unclear how long the probe will take. And law-enforcement officials wouldn't say a word about which Trump associates were

targeted. Comey declined to say whether his agency had questioned Michael Flynn, Trump's just-fired national-security adviser; Paul Manafort, his fired campaign manager; or Roger Stone.

The White House moved to cut ties to all of them.

Trump spokesman Sean Spicer played down the importance of Flynn, calling him "a volunteer of the campaign."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



AFRICA 27 MILLION LACK ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER A girl washes her legs at a water point four kilometres from her home in Aweil, South Sudan. As World Water Day approaches on March 22, nearly 27 million people do not have access to clean water in Somalia, South Sudan, northeastern Nigeria and Yemen, compounding the problems of famine and civil war, according to UNICEF. Even those who can find water spend much of their day hiking, fetching and carrying the containers it. MACKENZIE KNOWLES-COURSIN/UNICEF VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ADVOCACY

Human rights commission calls for a hearing to address president's policies

A pan-American commission will hold an emergency hearing in Washington to investigate the impact of U.S. President Donald Trump's executive orders on human rights in the country.

Tuesday's hearing by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights was prompted by the requests from advocates in Canada and the U.S. to review what they called "deteriorating" conditions faced by asylum seekers and other migrants under the

Trump administration.

These groups have asked the commission to make findings that Trump's travel ban against six Muslim-majority countries, which has been temporarily blocked by judges, and his expansion of detention and deportation against migrants violate U.S. human rights obligations. Some of the groups hope the human rights body will rule the U.S. is not safe for refugees and recommend the suspension of

the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement.

"The expedited removals and expansion of detention under the orders are going to have profound implications on the U.S. asylum system," said Efrat Arbel, a University of British Columbia law professor who co-authored, with the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program, a recent review of Trump's executive orders.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IRAQ

Dozens killed, wounded in Baghdad suicide attack

A suicide car bombing in Baghdad killed at least 23 people on Monday and wounded 45 others, according to Iraqi officials.

The attack targeted a commercial area in the Amil neighbourhood, officials said. No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but Daesh has been behind previous Baghdad bombings. Iraqi forces have been battling the extremists in Mosul, the country's second largest city, since October.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BREXIT

The countdown begins

Britain will begin divorce proceedings from the European Union on March 29, starting the clock on two years of intense political and economic negotiations that will fundamentally change both the nation and its European neighbours.

Britain's ambassador to the EU, Tim Barrow, informed European Council President Donald Tusk of the exact start date on Monday morning.

"We are on the threshold of the most important negotiation for this country for a generation," Brexit Secretary David Davis said. "The gov-

ernment is clear in its aims: a deal that works for every nation and region of the U.K. and indeed for all of Europe — a new, positive partnership between the U.K. and our friends and allies in the European Union."

The trigger for all this tumult is the innocuous-sounding Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty, a never-before-used mechanism for withdrawing from the bloc. British Prime Minister Theresa May, under the Article, will notify Tusk of her nation's intentions to leave the 28-nation bloc. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kid builds Lego biz

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Fans can pick from six sets of building blocks

Sarah Hoyles
For Metro | Edmonton

A 10-year-old from Edmonton is building a business out of Lego.

Gavin Garipey is renting out his collection of the toy building blocks as part of a new venture called Rent a Brick.

"Big Lego sets can be very expensive," said Garipey. "Not everyone can afford the biggest sets, so I thought people should get to try the amazing ones like these."

Currently, Lego enthusiasts can pick from six available sets, including the 2,144-piece Star Wars-themed Assault on Hoth Set which includes the wampa that captures Luke Skywalker, according to the Rent a Brick website.

Garipey takes rental book-



Gavin Garipey, 10, has started a new business called Rent A Brick, where he rents out expensive sets to fellow Lego fans. SARAH HOYLES/FOR METRO

ings via text or through his website. Rentals start at \$15 and last for seven days, which Garipey figures provides "more than enough time to build and play with it. Then give it back."

He first got the idea of a Lego rental company last year, but needed capital. So he applied for a \$500 grant from a local bank.

Russ Morrow, CEO of River City Credit Union, said his financial institution gives 10 grants to youth aged 8-13 every year as part of a program for young entrepreneurs.

"It helps kids have an entrepreneurial experience," he said.

Garipey got his startup cash in June 2016, and spent it on building and maintaining a

website at rentabrick.ca, as well as printing up business cards. He officially launched his company in January.

Since then, Garipey has had a handful of renters, mostly kids, but some adults, he said.

Garipey is planning to re-invest his profits to purchase more Lego sets and expand his inventory.

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

POSTCARD NO. 49

DRUMHELLER VALLEY, ALTA



THE DRUMHELLER VALLEY IS KNOWN AS THE DINOSAUR CAPITAL OF THE WORLD, BUT IT WAS ONCE, ALSO ONE OF CANADA'S RICHEST COAL REGIONS. OUR FATHER WORKED IN THE ATLAS COAL MINE IN EAST COULEE UNTIL HE PASSED IN 1964, WHEN MY MOTHER PACKED UP THE FOUR KIDS AND WE MOVED TO EDMONTON. IT'S ALWAYS SPECIAL TO RETURN TO THIS AMAZING AND VERY UNIQUE PART OF CANADA. **MIKE SWICK**

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BLUEPRINT by David Hains

KEEPING TRANSIT ON TRACK

Transit ridership declined across North America in 2016, causing a revenue shortage in dozens of cities. It's tempting for some agencies to consider cutting service or increasing fares to make up the difference. But those moves can cause further declines in ridership, creating a vicious cycle.

Instead, Metro looks at how cities can get on a more virtuous cycle.

Primary Concerns

With 600 routes, bus riders in Seoul, South Korea, were often confused. Buses didn't run on time. And by 2004, 60 per cent of riders were complaining. The agency **colour-coded its buses** so riders could identify where they were headed, and routes were simplified. **Outcome:** Complaints went down to 15 per cent and ridership increased by 30 to 40 per cent.

Focus

Houston **cut back service on low-frequency bus routes** in favour of ensuring regular runs on the most well-used routes. That way, people can turn up to the bus stop without worrying about the schedule. **Outcome:** Bus ridership increased by 4 per cent without budget increases. It was one of two cities to see an increase of more than 1 per cent in 2016.

Fare Price

Facing high fares, L.A. **dedicated a half-cent sales tax** in 1980 to transit. Some money went to improving service, while another chunk went to lowering fares. **Outcome:** In 1985, L.A. had its best year for transit ridership. Fares skyrocketed afterwards, and L.A. never again reached the same ridership levels.

Wider Web

One way to make transit more attractive is to focus on the customer experience. That can mean **better bus shelters, clean stations**, or something as simple as **free Wi-Fi**. **Outcome:** In California, Amtrak achieved a 2.7 per cent increase in ridership after it introduced free Wi-Fi.

Culture Shock

To cut down on people driving to work alone in mostly empty cars, Seattle introduced a **law** more than 20 years ago **forcing big companies to encourage alternatives** like transit or carpooling. Companies offered transit passes or cash incentives to quit driving. **Outcome:** Solo drivers declined by 4.6 per cent.

PUBLIC WORKS

The week in urbanism



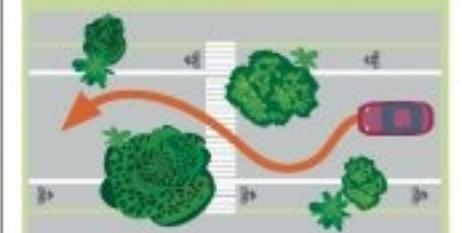
Sweden gets all the cool things

A Stockholm architecture firm has proposed a giant, glass egg-shaped indoor park. The idea is to give Stockholmers a green refuge during the long, cold winter months. The warm air for the greenhouse-like facility would come from a nearby underground parking lot.

Walk this way

Dubai has introduced a "smart" pedestrian traffic signal. Using sensors and cameras, it automatically detects the needs of pedestrians (walk time, number of pedestrians) on the sidewalk and in the crosswalk, and adjusts traffic signals accordingly.

URBAN DICTIONARY



DEFINITION

Woonerf is a Dutch word for streets that give equal priority to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians by placing them all on the same level and reducing driving speeds to walking pace. Also referred to as "home zones."

USE IT IN A SENTENCE

Emma felt safe walking down the neighbourhood **woonerf**, which put her at eye level with motorists.

CITY CHAMP

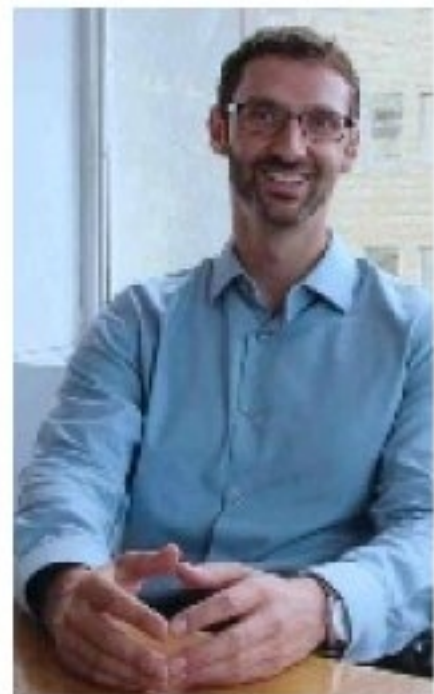
Hazel Borys is the managing director of PlaceMakers, a planning and consultation firm. Based in Winnipeg, Borys used to love sprawl, but now tweets about zoning, pedestrian issues, and art.

@hborys



WORD ON THE STREET by Sarah-Joyce Battersby

Popping ballooning budgets on mega infrastructure jobs



Matti Siemiatycki CONTRIBUTED

The federal government is expected to flesh out a plan Wednesday to invest almost \$190 billion in infrastructure over the next 12 years.

But will it be enough?

Whether it's Boston's Big Dig, Europe's Chunnel or (insert your local project here), mega projects are rarely on-budget. In fact, they chronically rack up extra costs.

Metro asked Matti Siemiatycki, a planning professor at the University of Toronto, why it happens, and how to fix it.

While mega projects are complex, consistent overruns suggest it's not random, he said. If it was, planners would

guess under budget sometimes, which rarely happens.

Instead, one theory goes that someone is lying, either to themselves or to others.

Lying to oneself is called optimism bias. It means we imagine best-case scenarios and hope issues can be controlled even as things go off the rails.

Lying to others is what leading scholar Bent Flyvbjerg calls strategic misrepresentation. Large projects sometimes incentivize fudging both the costs and the benefits, like giving overly sunny ridership projections for a transit project, in order to win public and political support.

But Siemiatycki has solutions.

Collect data: Governments should fire up the analytics machine and turn infrastructure planning into a numbers game, collecting stats on mega projects as diligently as baseball teams do for batters.

Change incentives: Reward the best solution, not the cheapest. Data could help here, giving better insight into which builders provide accurate budget and time projections, and put them at the top of the heap for bids.

Budget boot camp: A U.K. program put all civil servants working on projects over a certain cost threshold through

a training program to ward off bad planning.

Rope in private dollars:

When public projects team up with private enterprise often the same people are responsible for designing, building and maintaining it, so they can't pass the buck or dodge deadlines. Also, the deals generally reward meeting targets along the way.

However it's done, fixes need to come soon, said Siemiatycki, who fears public confidence in government is waning "not only to deliver projects, but to use infrastructure to address the major challenges that our communities face."



All of this centres on Eurocentric beauty standards, which privilege those who are white or are white adjacent in appearance

Shantel Buggs, PhD candidate in sociology at University of Texas



The structural emasculation of Asian men in all forms of media became a self-fulfilling prophecy that produced an actual abhorrence to Asian men in the real world

TV host Eddie Huang



It's easy to keep yourself in the dark about racism and bias when you are part of the majority, and I seem to have shone a bit of light about this in those spaces

Hadiya Roderique, lawyer



Racism in the dating game

CULTURE

Black women and Asian men the victims of cultural biases

Sofi Papamarko
life@metronews.ca



"I'm open to dating women of all backgrounds," he tells me. "Except for black women."

"I've just never been attracted to Asian men," she says.

Uncomfortable yet? Unfortunately, the vast majority of singles I've worked with have clear racial preferences and biases when it comes to dating. Now that I'm four years into professional matchmaking, I've seen clear patterns emerge when it comes to race and attraction.

White men: congratulations! Women of every racial background seem to strongly prefer dating you. Asian and Latin women are most popular with the gents. Black women and Asian men are the two groups most notably at a dating disadvantage. They are the hardest singles for me to match, because they tend to be excluded from the match searches of the majority of clients.

The online dating world is also stacked against them. According to Christian Rudder's OKCupid

blog, stats from 2014 show that 82 per cent of non-black men on OKCupid show some bias against black women. Asian men's profiles are consistently rated the lowest by single women using online dating sites. But why?

"Attractiveness is a very haphazard dish that can't be boiled down to height or skin colour, but Asian men are told that regardless of what the idyllic mirepoix is or isn't, we just don't have the ingredients," television host Eddie Huang recently wrote in the New York Times.

Pop culture is a window into desire. Consider the male Asian characters in movies you've seen in the last several years. When was the last time you saw a North American film where a desirable Asian man played the lead and didn't know martial arts?

A similar story presents itself when we deconstruct black women in popular culture. In film and television, black women are often portrayed as two-dimensional "strong and sassy" stereotypes. When cast as a romantic interest, they're usually played by biracial or multiracial women with lighter skin tones.

"Society tells us that black women are hypersexual but also more masculine than other women, while it suggests that Asian men are less masculine — to the point of being effeminate — and that they are physically less attractive," says Shantel

Buggs, a PhD Candidate in Sociology at the University of Texas.

The exclusion of Asian men is a particularly visible problem in the gay community. "No rice, no spice" is the social networking apps Scruff and Grindr parlance for "no East Asian men, no South Asian men." Straight people aren't as upfront about their prejudices, but having spoken to several women of colour about their time online, they seem to get fewer matches than other women and are frequently fetishized when they do connect.

In a recent feature article in the Walrus, lawyer Hadiya Roderique detailed her challenges dating as a woman of colour. When Hadiya photoshopped her dating profile photos so that she appeared to be a white woman, her profile's popularity skyrocketed.

"When you combine demographics, the fact that users disproportionately message others of the same race, fetishism, sexualization of blackness, racism and anti-blackness, it adds up to — to put it mildly — a 'harder time' in those spaces," she said.

So are you racist if you aren't open to dating everyone? I don't know. Are you the product of a racist society? Undoubtedly, yes. We all are. And we're going to have to work hard at being inclusive and open-minded in dating and in every other aspect of life if we're set on making any progress at all. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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RANKING

It takes more than just money to be happy...ask the Norwegians

We're happy...just a little less happy than usual.

That's the main Canadian takeaway from the World Happiness Report where the country dropped to its lowest-ever ranking, coming in at seventh place, having usually occupied fifth or sixth on the list.

Norway is now the happiest country on Earth, Americans are getting sadder, and it takes more than just money to be happy were the other primary findings.

Norway vaulted to the top slot despite the plummeting price of oil, a key part of its economy. Income in the U.S. has gone up over the past decade, but happiness is declining. The U.S. was 14th, down from No. 13 last year.

"It's the human things that matter. If the riches make it harder to have frequent and trustworthy relationship between people, is it worth it?" asked John Helliwell, the lead author of the report and an economist at the University of British Columbia. "The material can stand in the way of the human."

Norway moved from No. 4 to the top spot in the report's rankings, which combine economic,

health and polling data compiled by economists that are averaged over three years from 2014 to 2016. Norway edged past previous champ Denmark, which fell to second. Iceland, Switzerland and Finland round out the top 5.

"Good for them. I don't think Denmark has a monopoly on happiness," said Meik Wiking, chief executive officer of the Happiness Research Institute in Copenhagen, who wasn't part of the global scientific study that came out with the rankings.

"What works in the Nordic countries is a sense of community and understanding in the common good," Wiking said.

Still, you have to have some money to be happy, which is why most of the bottom countries are in desperate poverty. But at a certain point extra money doesn't buy extra happiness, Helliwell and others said.

Central African Republic fell to last on the happiness list, and

7

Canada dropped from sixth place to seventh in the new World Happiness Index.

is joined at the bottom by Burundi, Tanzania, Syria and Rwanda.

The report ranks 155 countries. The rankings are based on GDP per person, healthy life expectancy with four factors from global surveys. In those surveys, people give scores from 1 to

10 on how much social support they feel they have if something goes wrong, their freedom to make their own life choices, their sense of how corrupt their society is and how generous they are.

Study co-author and economist Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University said that the sense of community, so strong in Norway, is deteriorating in the United States.

"We're becoming more and more mean spirited. And our government is becoming more and more corrupt. And inequality is rising," Sachs said, citing research and analysis he conducted on America's declining happiness for the report. "It's a long-term trend and conditions are getting worse." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Knit this move in, untie those knots

YOGA

The Twisted Stitcher pose is tailor-made for warming up

YuMee Chung
life@metronews.ca

This week's offering is one of the exercises my granny would do, much to my chagrin, while watching me at the playground.

I use it today as a pre-yoga warm-up to mobilize the spine, relax the shoulders and improve circulation in the hands.

Take note knitters, crocheters and other textile artists: this one is tailor-made for you.

1. Situate yourself in a wide-open space with your feet set shoulder-distance apart and arms hanging slackly by your sides.

2. Rotate your spine to the right as you gaze over the right shoulder and pivot onto your left toes to protect your knees. Then, do the same on the second side.

3. Turn from side-to-side, gaining speed as you go.

4. Curl your hands into loose fists and, moving only with momentum, percussively massage your lower back.

5. Then, bring the hands up to thump the fronts of your shoulders.



YuMee demonstrates a Twisted Stitcher. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

6. Finally, gain enough momentum to throw the arms over your shoulders and tenderize your upper back and the corners of your neck for five or more breaths.

7. Decelerate until the body comes to stillness and your arms hang heavy by your sides.

8. Notice the warmth in your hands and the feeling of well-being.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

YuMee Chung is a recovering lawyer who teaches yoga in Toronto. She is on the faculty of several yoga teacher training programs. Learn more about her at padmani.com.

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PROSTATE DRUGS' DEPRESSION LINK

A common class of medications used to treat urinary symptoms in men with an enlarged prostate does not boost the risk of suicide, but in rare cases can cause depression, a study has found.

Researchers investigating the potential adverse effects of finasteride and dutasteride after Health Canada issued a warning about a possible link between the drugs and suicidal behaviour. These drugs, known as 5-alpha reductase inhibitors, or 5ARIs, work by shrinking the prostate.

"Our study shows that 5-alpha reductase inhibitors do not lead to an increased risk of suicide," said Dr. Blayne Welk, a urologist at Western University in London, Ont., who led the study. "However,

it is concerning that we found a small but significant increase in the risk of self-harm and depression."

Researchers analyzed 2003-13 health data from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences for 186,000 men over age 65 with an enlarged prostate, half of whom were being treated with finasteride or dutasteride and half of whom had not been prescribed either of the drugs.

Among the men who took one of the medications, there were 38 deaths from suicide: 16 of them were taking finasteride and 22 were on dutasteride. But in the group that was not prescribed one of the 5ARI medications, 36 also took their own lives.

Welk said it is impossible

to prove if the drugs were behind the self-inflicted deaths, as there may have been confounding factors such as mental health problems or other illnesses.

The study found the risk of depression and propensity for self-harm equalled one extra case for every 420 men treated with one of the medications for a year. However, the researchers stressed the drugs' potential benefits likely outweigh the risk for most patients.

"If that depression does happen, it's something you should talk to your doctor about and see if the medication you're on for your prostate is still the right medication to be using," said Welk.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Not just for gamers: It's VR in the ER

TECHNOLOGY

Doctors adopt virtual reality to put patients' minds at ease

Jonathan Forani
life@metronews.ca

When 9-year-old Tess Baird landed at Sick Kids for surgery on a badly broken finger she was terrified. "The big lights, all the big machines. I was really scared," she said.

To put her mind at ease, hospital staff gave her a virtual reality headset — futuristic-looking goggles with a 360-degree video screen — that detailed the impending procedure from a patient's perspective.

The frightened Brampton girl experienced a blow by blow of what to expect from the moment she'd be greeted by nursing staff, to being wheeled through the halls on a gurney, receiving anesthetic and falling into a fog, to finally waking up when it was over.

When she underwent the sur-



Patient Tess Baird uses a VR headset while Dr. Ben O'Sullivan looks on as part of a project to ease pre-surgery anxiety. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

gery 30 minutes later, she was no longer scared.

"Let's say I had 10 nerves. Nine of them were gone," said Tess, who broke her finger while roughhousing with her brother.

Virtual reality isn't just for gamers anymore. Toronto anesthesiologists Fahad Alam and Clyde Matava are using immersive reality in health care in the

only such lab in Canada called the Collaborative Human Immersive and Interactive Lab (CHISIL).

They have tested the technology on more than 200 patients including Tess at The Hospital for Sick Children and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. "We're taking (VR) out of the gaming realm, and actually using it to help patients and changing care,"

said Alam. With the immersive experience, "the fear of unknown is kind of eliminated."

Doctors are now analyzing the data and the results have been encouraging. There have been no episodes of "VR sickness" (headaches and nausea similar to motion sickness) and any fear prior to surgery has decreased. They found that nearly all the children

at Sick Kids preferred the VR over traditional PowerPoint slides to explain the surgery process. One hundred parents of patients, including Tess's mom Kristen Wall, also tried the technology.



Let's say I had 10 nerves. Nine of them were gone.

Tess Baird, patient

"There's nothing more frightening as a parent than having one of your children sick or broken," said Wall, who found it eased her nerves as well.

"I watched (Tess) go from nervous and frightened to more armed with information."

Preoperative anxiety doesn't just affect children. It is a significant problem across all ages.

"Up to 80 per cent of patients coming for any type of surgery can be suffering from some form of preoperation anxiety," said Alam. That anxiety can result in pain and increased anesthetic requirements. The unease doesn't just dissipate after surgery, it can delay recovery.

The VR could replace current less effective methods of stress relief including cartoon drawings, photographs and standard 2D video by allowing patients to "pre-experience the environment" in a gamelike way.

For Laura Victoria-Perez, 41, who suffers from social anxiety, the pre-surgery VR experience was ideal. "It feels like you're inside a video game," said Victoria-Perez, who had surgery in November. "If at my age I was afraid, I can only imagine how it scares some kids before a surgery."

Virtual reality is most often associated with pricey brands like Oculus Rift and PlayStation VR, which cost upwards of \$500. At Toronto's CHISIL lab, Matava and Alam have kept their costs in check using Google Cardboard, which is mounted to a smartphone rather than using its own screen. At \$5-\$15 per headset it is among the most inexpensive of VR options. The Sick Kids and Sunnybrook doctors hope that the technology will also be helpful for training health workers.

For Tess, the virtual reality prelude was a success. "Don't worry," is her post-op advice. "It's not going to be as scary as you think." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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YouTubers hit out at 'restricted' filter

SOCIAL MEDIA

Tegan and Sara lead calls to lift block on gay, trans content

A chorus of Canadian LGBTQ YouTubers, including pop duo Tegan and Sara, is calling for the video service to stop filtering out gay and trans-themed videos for some users.

The Calgary-raised sisters took to social media to question why YouTube's "restricted" setting blocks a wide variety of LGBTQ-friendly content for no clear reason.

"If you put YouTube on restricted mode a bunch of our music videos disappear. I checked myself. LGBTQ people shouldn't be restricted. SAD!" Tegan and Sara (below) tweeted. Among the missing clips were videos from their latest album, including for "That Girl" and "U-turn."

They were joined by Halifax singer Ria Mae, who said her video for Gold, which features the singer in a lesbian relationship, was also being filtered out.

"Young gay kids need to see themselves represented and they need to know it's normal, it's OK and it's not X-rated," Mae said in a video on her Instagram account.

"It sends a bad mes-

sage to young gay kids and young trans kids that their lives are not normal or acceptable."

At issue is YouTube's "restricted" designation, which lets parents, schools and libraries filter content that may be considered inappropriate for users under 18. YouTube calls it "an optional feature used by a very small subset of users."

What's unclear is whether the types of videos in question are being labelled as "restricted" for the first time, or if this has been an ongoing practice that's only recently gained attention.

Video producer Michael Rizzi, who's based in Toronto, says he's concerned with the message it sends to loyal YouTube users. He's seen 176 of his 236 videos disappear.

"restricted" mode, representing 75 per cent of the clips he's uploaded over the past five years.

"It's more a feeling of being pushed to the side," Rizzi says. "It's a pretty big screw-up on their end."

In an emailed statement on Monday, YouTube acknowledged the filter saying "some videos that cover subjects like health, politics and sexuality may not appear for users and institutions that choose to use this feature."

YouTube added later that "some videos are incorrectly labelled by our automated system and we realize it's very important to get this right."

"We're working hard to make some improvements," the company said without offering further details.

The lack of information has left YouTubers struggling to determine what's being sifted out, what isn't and why it's happening.

Rizzi suspects video tags like "LGBT" or "gay couple" may be triggering the filter for 7 Things I Love About My Boyfriend, a video he says shouldn't be restricted for a younger audience.

Even his clip commissioned for YouTube's #ProudToBe campaign, timed to last year's Pride Month, is now filtered out.

"YouTube's own equality campaign is restricted, which is probably the weirdest part of everything," Rizzi says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Underfed and vulnerable but Anne's resolve is unwavering

THE SHOW: Anne, Season 1, Episodes 1 & 2 (CBC)
THE MOMENT: The stump

Siblings Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert (R.H. Thomson and Geraldine James, both perfect) wanted to adopt a boy to help work their Prince Edward Island farm. Instead they got Anne (Amybeth McNulty, also perfect) an exuberant, redheaded orphan tween whose imagination outweighs her underfed frame. Matthew fell for her, but Marilla, more practical, thinks Anne should return to the orphanage.

"Couldn't I do the farm chores even though I'm a girl?" Anne asks.

"That's not the way of things

and you know it," Marilla replies.

"But couldn't I?" Anne persists. "I'm as strong as a boy, and I prefer to be outdoors."

Marilla's resolve wavers. "Do you consider yourself to be delicate and incapable?" Anne asks. "Because I don't."

That's the text of this Anne reboot, from creator Moira Walley-Beckett, who went from writing Breaking Bad to creating the backstage-at-the-ballet drama Flesh and Bone to Green Gables.

But Walley-Beckett also gives us subtext. Reading between the novel's lines and adding verisimilitude, she gives us quick but potent glimpses of the miseries many orphans

faced in 1890s Imperialist culture.

As Anne makes her case to Marilla, we recall two flashes we've just seen: Anne, alone in a room in an orphan asylum, with two men moving in on her as the door swings shut. And Anne, in indentured servitude to a family with too many children, bent over a stump, skirts lifted, being beaten by a drunk man.

She doesn't tell Marilla why she so desperately needs to stay. But Walley-Beckett makes sure we see it.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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QUALICO
communities

Police say Tom Brady's missing Super bowl jersey has been tracked in "possession of a credentialed member of the international media" in Mexico

Hart-racing shift

Sidney Crosby and Connor McDavid looked to be running away from the pack in the Hart Trophy race at mid-season but, since then, a flood of worthy contenders has emerged. Here is a look at the now crowded field:

1 Sidney Crosby

He's No. 1 in points-per-game and clinched his first 40-goal season since 2009-10. He's right there in the thick of the race for the Rocket Richard and Art Ross trophies despite a nearly two-week absence to start the season.



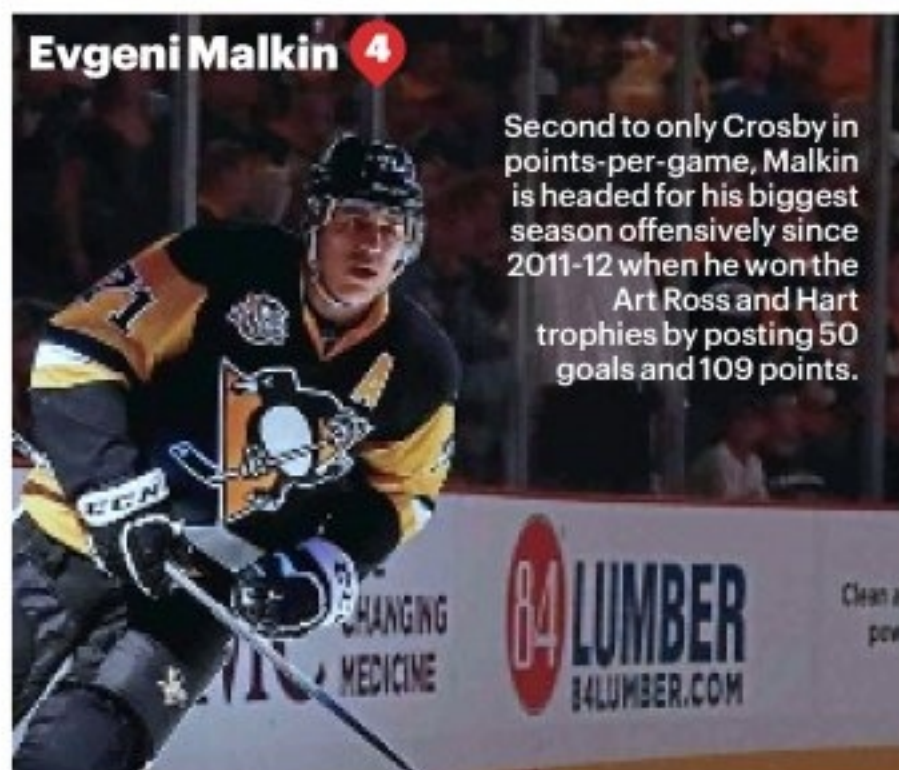
2 Connor McDavid

He's only 20, in his second NHL season and already an MVP candidate. The Oilers' captain has had a hand in almost 40 per cent of his club's offence, leads the NHL in assists and is a favourite to win the scoring title.



3 Patrick Kane

He's not producing at last year's MVP pace — 46 goals and 106 points — but has been pretty close to it in the past couple months, collecting 20 goals and 30 points since Feb. 1. The NHL hasn't had a repeat MVP winner since Alex Ovechkin (2008, 2009).



4 Evgeni Malkin

Second to only Crosby in points-per-game, Malkin is headed for his biggest season offensively since 2011-12 when he won the Art Ross and Hart trophies by posting 50 goals and 109 points.



5 Brad Marchand

No one had more goals or points since the beginning of December heading into Monday's action, making the 28-year-old from Hammonds Plains a viable threat to win both the Art Ross and Rocket Richard.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/
PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES



6 Brent Burns

Burns is tracking toward one of the more electric seasons from a defenceman ever. He has an outside shot at joining Paul Coffey, Bobby Orr, Ray Bourque, Denis Potvin and Doug Wilson (his GM in San Jose) as the only blue-liners to crack 30 goals and 80 points.

Erik Karlsson

Ottawa's captain is tiptoeing back into the Hart race with maybe the most well-rounded season of his career. Karlsson is pretty close to a point-per-game again despite a drop in ice-time while leading the league in blocked shots.



PAY EQUITY

USA Hockey, women's team hopeful for deal

USA Hockey and the women's national team say their marathon meeting Monday was productive and they hope to have an agreement this week that will end their ongoing wage dispute and avoid a boycott of the upcoming world championships.

The sides met for more than 10 hours Monday in Philadelphia and will continue discussions later this week. Players announced last week they'd boycott the upcoming world championships in Plymouth, Mich., unless significant progress was made toward a labour agreement.

USA Hockey and players released statements Monday

night saying they hoped a deal would be reached in time for the tournament, which begins March 31.

Players said they were hopeful to get an agreement in time to have a training camp and prepare to defend their world championship gold medal on home ice.

"We feel like we made progress today," star forward Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson said by phone. "They were productive, and we are hopeful that we can come to a timely agreement that would get us to Plymouth in time to prepare as a team so that we could compete in worlds." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



IN BRIEF

Homan rink rises to top

Rachel Homan and her Canada rink gave themselves a major confidence boost Monday in their quest for gold at the women's world curling championship, handing Switzerland its first loss and taking sole possession of first place in the round-robin standings in Beijing.

Canada improved to 5-0 with an 8-6 win over Swiss skip by Alina Paetz, a two-time world champion. The Canadians also topped the U.S. 7-5. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Donaldson makes his Blue Jays spring debut

Toronto Blue Jays star Josh Donaldson made his spring training debut Monday, going 0-for-2 with a walk in his first game since injuring his right calf more than a month ago.

The 2015 AL MVP hurt himself Feb. 17 while running sprints. He was the designated hitter in an 8-2 loss to Minnesota, and is scheduled to play at his normal third base spot on Wednesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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1 South

The only bracket with the top four seeds still alive, so the North Carolina Tar Heels' path looks the same as it did on Selection Sunday.

UNC (29-7) needed a game-closing 12-0 run to rally past the eighth-seeded Arkansas Razorbacks. Now the Tar Heels meet fourth-seeded Butler (25-8) in the undercard to Friday's matchup of second-seeded Kentucky (31-5) and third-seeded UCLA (31-4) in Memphis, Tennessee.



North Carolina's Kennedy Meeks

Regional reset

A look at the Final Four paths for the top remaining NCAA teams across the U.S.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

West 2

The only other region to have its No. 1 and No. 2 seeds both make the Sweet 16. Top-seeded Gonzaga, pictured, (34-1) faces fourth-seeded West Virginia (28-8) on Thursday in San Jose; No. 2-seed Arizona (32-4) meets 11-seed Xavier (23-13) — the lowest-seeded team still in the field after its rout of 3-seed Florida State.

If seeds hold, that would set up a rematch of a December game won by the Bulldogs 69-62. But Arizona didn't have Allonzo Trier, who was suspended for the first 19 games for performance-enhancing drugs.



3 Midwest

The Midwest also had three of its top four seeds reach the Sweet 16. But it's the bottom half of the bracket commanding the most attention with 7-seed Michigan, pictured, possibly the hottest team in the field.

The Wolverines (26-11) have beaten Oklahoma State and 2-seed Louisville for their first NCAA wins since 2014.

Michigan made 16 threes against Oklahoma State and made 33 of 52 shots (63.4 per cent) after halftime in those two wins. Michigan faces No. 3 seed Oregon (31-5) in Kansas City on Thursday. The Kansas Jayhawks (30-4) get fourth-seeded Purdue (27-7), the Big Ten regular-season champion.



4 East

Welcome to the lone topsy-turvy bracket after losses by No. 1 overall seed Villanova and No. 2 seed Duke.

Now third-seeded Baylor (27-7) is the highest remaining seed entering a matchup with seventh-seeded South Carolina (24-10). The other half of Friday's bracket in New York features fourth-seeded Florida (26-8) against No. 8 seed Wisconsin (27-9).



Baylor's Johnathan Motley
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PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada



Avoid the siren call of the food court and whip up your own healthy, delicious lunch. Not today, chilli fries!

Ready in 10 minutes
Prep time: 5 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients

- 1 can tuna, packed in water (5 oz)
- 1 stem of celery, chopped fine
- 3 or 4 cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1 or 2 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tortillas
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1/2 avocado, sliced

Directions

1. In a bowl, mix tuna, celery, tomatoes and mayonnaise.
2. Lay your tortillas on a work surface. Spoon a stripe of tuna mixture down the middle of each tortilla. Now lay down a strip of the grated carrot, right next to the tuna. Place slices of avocado right next to the carrot.
3. Wrap one side of the tortilla over the other. Now tuck in the sides and keep rolling so everything is snugly inside.
4. Slice the tortilla in half and serves with a side of mixed greens.

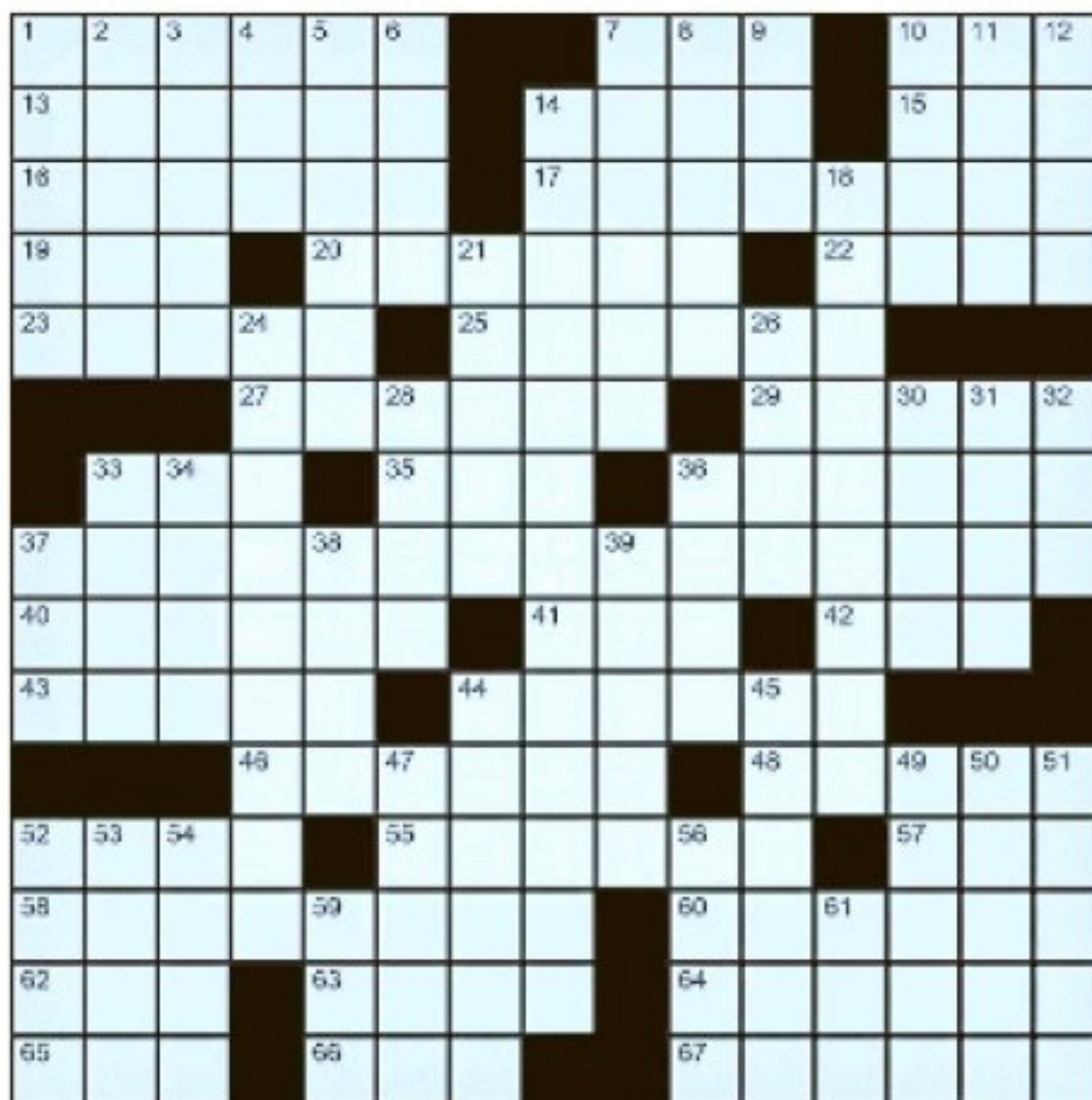
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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. North West Mounted Police officer, Sam _ (b.1849 - d.1919)
7. Undergarment, e.g.
10. Canadian restaurant chain, The _ Steakhouse + Bar
13. Pondered
14. _ lily
15. Brick wall's greenery
16. Checking out a website
17. Naysayer
19. Pad _ Mao (Rice noodles dish)
20. Garden statues
22. Via, in verse
23. Accounting firm, _ & Young
25. Most abundant
27. Peoples' possessive pronouns
29. Entice
33. Neither here _ there
35. "The Crying Game" (1992) actor Stephen
36. More blood-and-guts-ish
37. Canadian magician Doug Henning was this political group's candidate (in the Rose-dale riding of Toronto) in the 1993 federal election: 3 wds.
40. Unchanged: 3 wds.
41. "Kids" (2001)
42. Telephone bk. listings
43. Fettuccine is a form
44. Like the CN logo
46. 1928: Trivial Breath poet Ms. Wylie
48. Requirements



52. 'Shake' with a spoon
55. Expressed
57. Shoppers Drug Mart cosmetics line
58. Population counts
60. Temple ceremony
62. Dramatist's division

63. Way to kick the football
64. Creature in a Tennessee Williams play title
65. 17th Greek letter
66. _ in stone
67. More man-of-the-monor-ly

DOWN

11. Deep Purple's " _ on the Water"
2. Radio dial
3. Ms. DeGeneres
4. High Priest in the Old Testament
5. Distance
6. Shangri-la

7. Summarizing papers
8. The Russian language, in Quebec City
9. Band's bitty blaster
10. _ and kin (Friends and family)
11. Goffin-King

- penned tune: "Don't _ Change"
12. Pita serving perhaps
14. Scenic driving route in the Avalon region of Newfoundland: 2 wds.
18. Vocalization
21. Bay window
24. Models when on the fashion runway
26. End the endlessness
28. Epochs
30. Spanish artist, Joan _ (b.1893 - d.1983)
31. Goldfish and canaries
32. " _ (Just a Little Bit Harder)" by Janis Joplin
33. Galaxy gr.
34. Mr. Redding
36. Ms. Paltrow, for short
37. Reclined rest
38. Oman money
39. Towards the ship's left side
44. Aim
45. Jeans hue
47. Periodical's particular publishing
49. = meaning
50. One of the NHL's six Sutter Brothers from Viking, Alberta
51. Sun-related
52. Boo-boo in Al Pacino's 1983 flick
53. _savvy
54. Call Question link
56. CNN anchor Ms. Burnett
59. Un-downs
61. _ of margarine

* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You should know that others notice you today, especially bosses, parents and VIPs. Therefore, be mindful of your behaviour. Fortunately, you will be sympathetic toward someone, which makes you look good.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Thoughts of travelling appeal to you now. In particular, you will appreciate the beauty of arts and crafts from other cultures. You also will enjoy the stimulation of different surroundings.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
If you have to divide or share something with someone today, you will be more than generous. In fact, remember to be fair to yourself as well. Don't give away the farm.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Today you have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Fortunately, you will find this easy to do because you feel genuinely sympathetic and concerned for someone else's welfare.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Because you feel sympathetic toward a co-worker today, he or she might come to you for advice or counseling. Never pass up an opportunity to practice kindness.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Welcome any opportunity to express your creative talent today. You are not a noun; you are a verb. It's the doing that really counts.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You might want to cocoon at home today and seek out some privacy, because you feel the need to catch your breath and enjoy your own space. That's just fine. We all need to do this from time to time.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
When talking to others today, you won't be satisfied with superficial chitchat. You want a real, meaningful discussion with someone. (Not just comments about the weather.)

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If out shopping today, you might be tempted to spend too much money on luxurious items. It's your nature to go big or go home.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Today the moon is in your sign, which makes you more emotional than usual. The good news is that this can attract a little bit of extra good luck!

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Today you will prefer some privacy. Ideally, you will work alone or behind the scenes, because this will suit you best.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
A conversation with a female friend is important. Perhaps you need to confide in someone, or someone needs to confide in you.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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